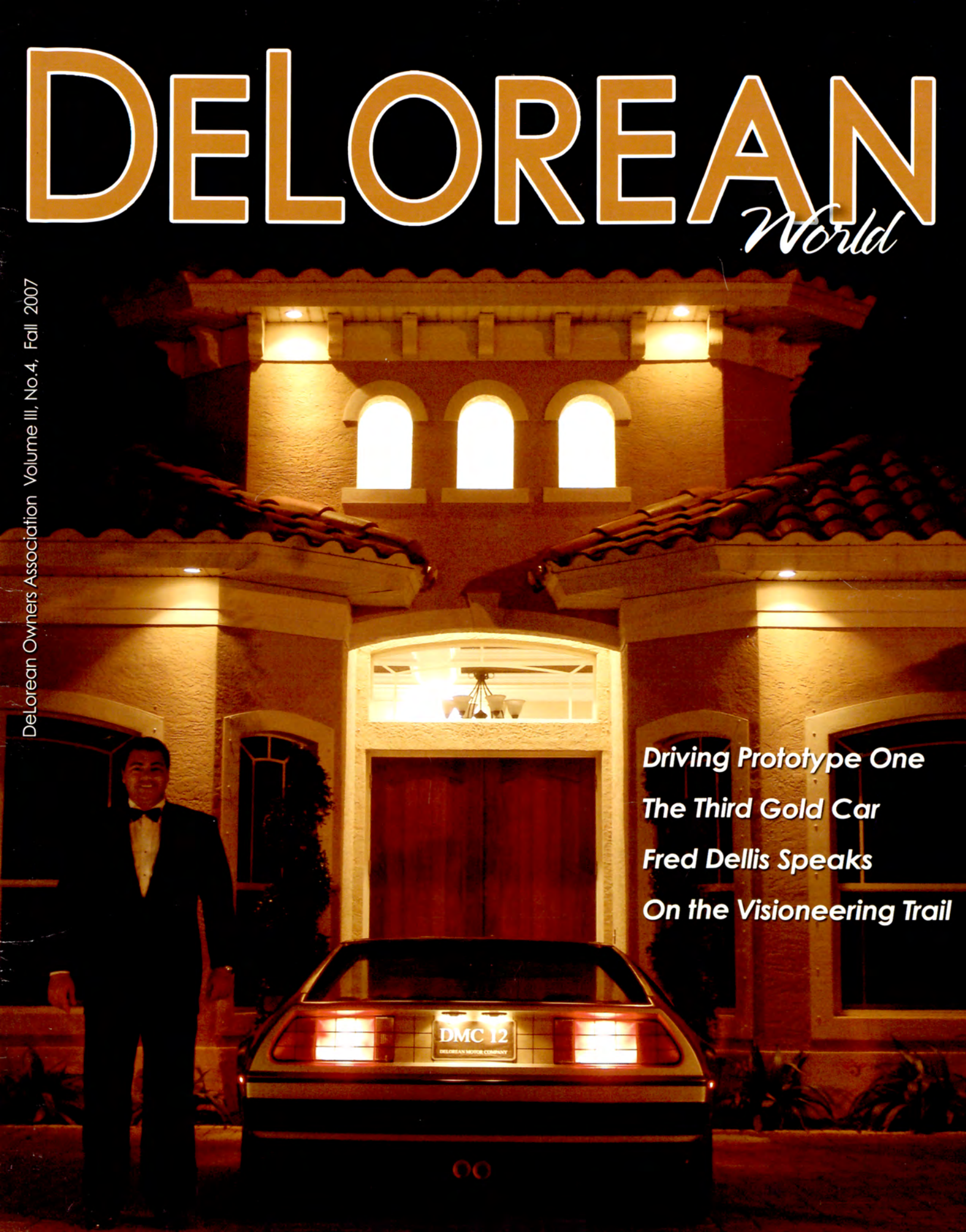
DeLOREAN *World*

DeLorean Owners Association Volume III, No.4, Fall 2007

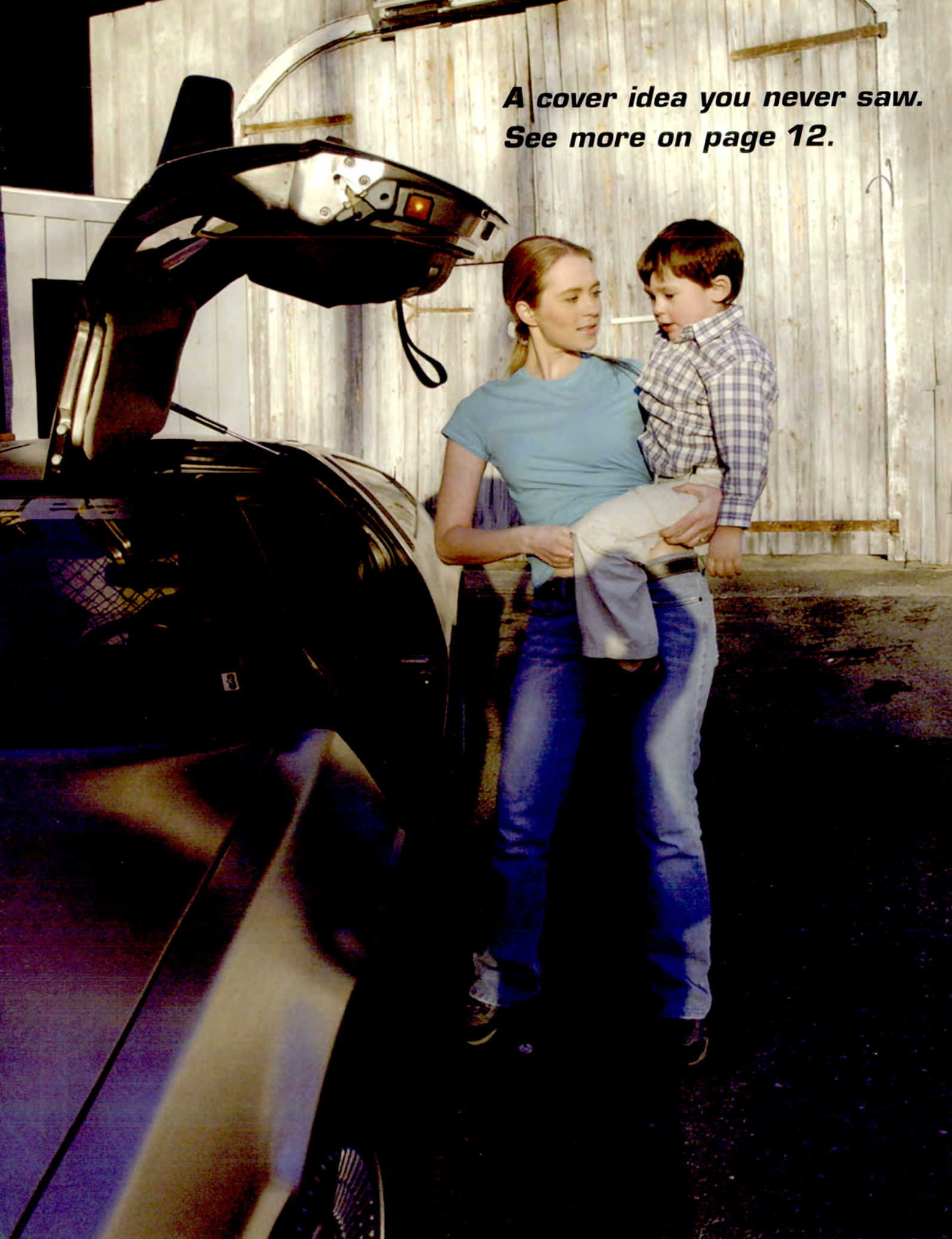


Driving Prototype One

The Third Gold Car

Fred Dellis Speaks

On the Visioneering Trail


A cover idea you never saw.
See more on page 12.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I glance over the past issues of DeLorean World, one cannot deny the importance that the DeLorean Owners Association has played throughout the years. The knowledge, the history and most of all the camaraderie of the Association community have all help keep alive the vision that John DeLorean created over three decades ago. The past few years have seen a great deal of changes not only in ownership but in the future of the car. A few months ago I had an opportunity to see the countdown to the closing of the Universal Studio's Back to the Future ride. It is again another chapter in the history of the DeLorean that has closed as other doors now begin to open. Recently, two significant DeLoreans, the Prototype DeLorean and Twin Turbo 502 have traded hands once again. One DeLorean has even traveled great lengths to its new home in New Zealand. And since the internet has sprouted, we are seeing DeLoreans being shipped all throughout the world by the click of a mouse. The car has a worldwide attraction that goes beyond its screen debut. It is an important piece of automotive history. I also look back in particular at the recent issues of DeLorean World magazine. Without the great research and writing of our editor Sascha Skucek, uncovering the mysteries of the rare DeLoreans wouldnt have come to fruition so quickly. It even brought me to view one of the rare Pilot DeLorean cars that was only a few minutes from my home hidden away in a garage. The Association has heard many things throughout the years but looking back at what this organization has done for the greater good of the DeLorean automobile will never be forgotten. I am proud to say that I was present when Sascha was editor of DeLorean World magazine and honored to be a part of a great friendship that worked beyond recognition to keep the prestige and style that John DeLorean envisioned for his stainless steel beauty. We hope you enjoy this issue of DeLorean World and thanks to all of the members for their continued support throughout the years.

Sincerely,

Tony Hilger
director@deloreanmagazine.com

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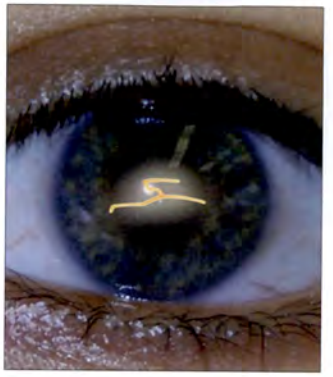

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Ride & Drive

Story: Sascha Skucek

For the love of a car, Tony Ierardi puts the prototypes to the test.

Tony Ierardi picks me up at the airport in Naples late in the evening. "I'll be in the silver Mercedes," he tells me via cell phone as I arrive. He doesn't disappoint. The 2007 CLS63 "four-door coupe" is breathtaking, a sweet ride. With seat belt secure, the rampage begins, and I'm thrust firmly into my leather seat as we head for Ierardi's house in the most powerful sedan on the planet.

It's past 11pm when we arrive, but too soon for sleep. There are wonders and toys to see: lightsabers, a rare Bren-Ten, Battlestar Gallactica collectibles, and, of course, the most amazing collection of DeLoreans ever assembled in one room. Ierardi's personal DeLorean is gleaming and spotless, the dealer sticker still on the windshield and that new leather smell still evident when he lifts the gullwing. Further along his personal air-conditioned garage rest the prototypes, waiting patiently for the busy coming morning.

Ierardi and I spend a few hours catching up at his Tiki bar overlooking the pool under a starry night. He's a generous host, offering me vintage Portuguese Port and a fine cigar. We discuss a range of topics: his acquisition of Prototype One, the Legend Turbo prototype, and now, the difficult prospect of sell-

With a guttural roar, Prototype One comes to life sounding meaner on four cylinders than production DeLoreans on six.

ing them both. He's always been a Lamborghini and Ferrari guy, although his DeLorean was definitely a staple in his life. But his devotion is all stainless now, a sign of his love for a car so misunderstood and unfairly battered over the years.

When Ierardi asked me to help him acquire Prototype One from Bill Yacobozzi two years ago, it was a matter of pride not profit. Ierardi's confidence was contagious and his perfectionist compulsion radiated sincerity. *This car needs to be restored properly,* he'd said.

Anyone lucky enough to see Prototype One in the last two years had no doubt Ierardi

was the right man to undertake the job. The resulting restoration had been nothing short of amazing. But it made the news of his intent to sell the car so much more difficult to bear. The Legend Turbo, too, seemed to be another favorite obsession. Ierardi spent months cleaning and reverse engineering 502, leaving the possibility of building new PRV turbos open.

502 fires to life, whining but with authority, again the sound unconventional to a production DeLorean.

But with his DeLorean repair facility still young and in need of coddling, with the advent of his new Aerospace Engineering business still waiting to put its feet on the ground, the land next door came up for sale. And while the building size for his businesses was adequate, Ierardi had expansion on his mind for the years to come. Acquiring the adjacent property seemed a no-brainer at the most unfortunate and impractical time – when he was spread too thin among his dreams.

Ierardi made his choice. Family before toys. Foundations first before reaching the stars.

I can't help but reel with the cliché in my mind – this is how a DeLorean should be.

With a guttural roar, Prototype One comes to life sounding meaner on four cylinders than production DeLoreans on six. The Citroen engine is smaller, but the overall weight of the car is less than production. As a prototype, the parts are hand-picked, not assembled for the layman, but rather to perform one purpose–to sell an ideal.

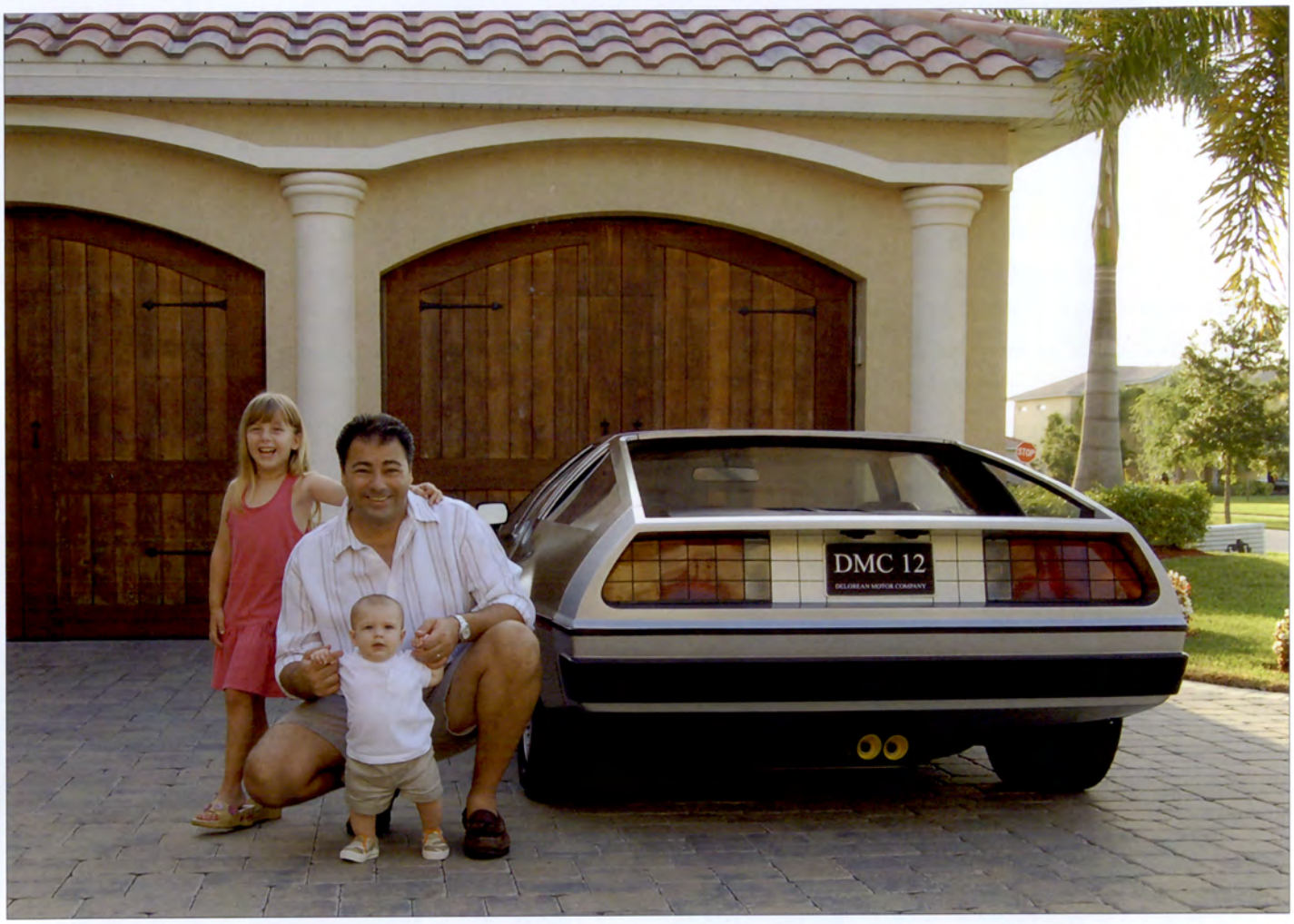
Ierardi takes Prototype One for a spin through his neighborhood. The people recognize it as just another DeLorean, he says, nothing especially unique in sunny Florida. But he does catch the wary eye of a police officer and pulls over. Okay yes, he was speeding a bit. No, the car hasn't been inspected or smogged or whatever else. In fact, there's no title or registration of any kind. Lucky for Ierardi, he knows the officer and the two exchange some DeLorean banter before he swings the prototype back around in front of his house. It's my turn.

To my great surprise, the prototype shifts and handles smoothly. The clutch is tricky, releasing almost the entire way before engaging the transmission. The power is much like a production DeLorean with similar first gear performance. Second gear sets the prototype apart, however, with a strong forward surge. The radius on the turns is more limited, but overall the experience is nostalgic and extremely satisfying.

This is a 70s car, after all, engrained with far-reaching aspirations and hopes, and one can't help but wonder what exactly the car could have been had John DeLorean not encountered the obstacles that would influence the final production design. "Booyah!" is the call from the driver's seat as I pull into the driveway a happy man, with one more thing to check off on my list of things to do in life.

502 fires to life, whining but with authority, again the sound unconventional to a production DeLorean. The interior is flawless, the stainless shines. Its condition rivals VIN 500 in Cleveland. Nicer 500 series DeLoreans are difficult to find. I slip the clutch into first gear and Ierardi watches me patiently from the passenger seat. I give him a glaring grin as if asking for final permission. He waves his hand forward and I hit the gas, laughing out loud as 502 guns ahead. I can't help but reel with the cliché in my mind–*this is how a DeLorean should be.* To second and third and fourth I shift, each as smooth as the next, molding into place as easy as butter, reminiscent of the close-ups in *Back to the Future* when Marty shifts, racing along the dark straightaway.

Another day and night pass by, with more good food and wine. A fine smoke turns to lightsabers and duels and I fight valiantly



against the dark side looming against the unknown horizon. It's a lost cause. Soon the prototypes must part ways to ensure Ierardi the pile of sand that borders his business. History is here now. Anything seems possible, but the chance that these two cars, now members of the $100,000 club, so vital to the beginnings of the DeLorean story, will ever be together again is slim. 502 is soon sold to Trevor FitzJohn, a loyal son to the legacy and trusted keeper. Prototype One's future is less certain, sold at Pebble Beach in August, rumored to a Texas museum.

The auctioneer's final blow of the hammer sends Ierardi bolting out into the fresh air with incredulity. *What have I just done?* The question resounds in his mind over and over again. Blood, sweat and soul he poured into the dream. If it was about money, he lost far more than he put in. No, this was about pride. This was about honor. As history passes through his fingers, Alexa and Patrick bring Ierardi the only peace of mind. For my family he reminds himself. For the foundation.

THE NEW OWNER OF 502

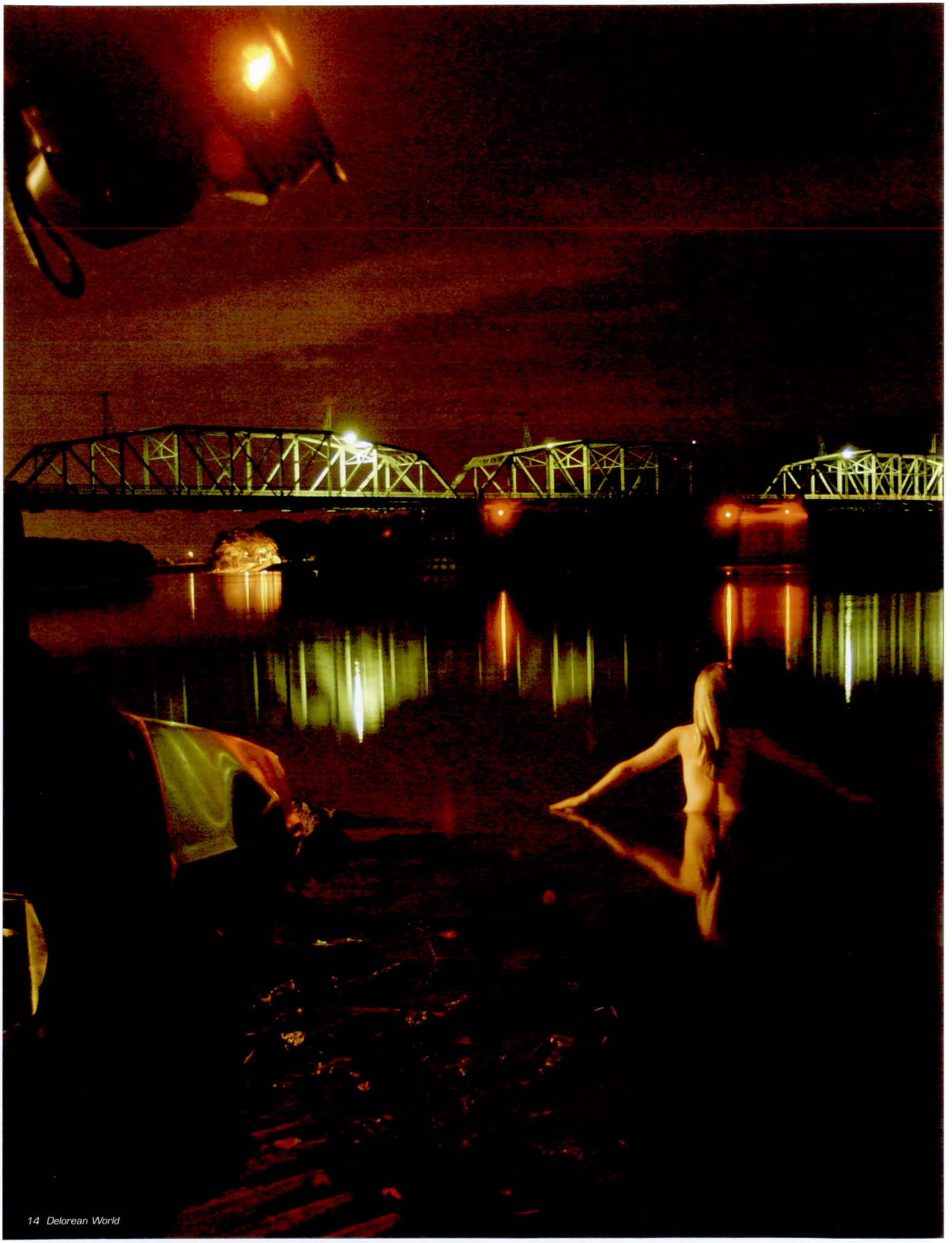
Trevor FitzJohn

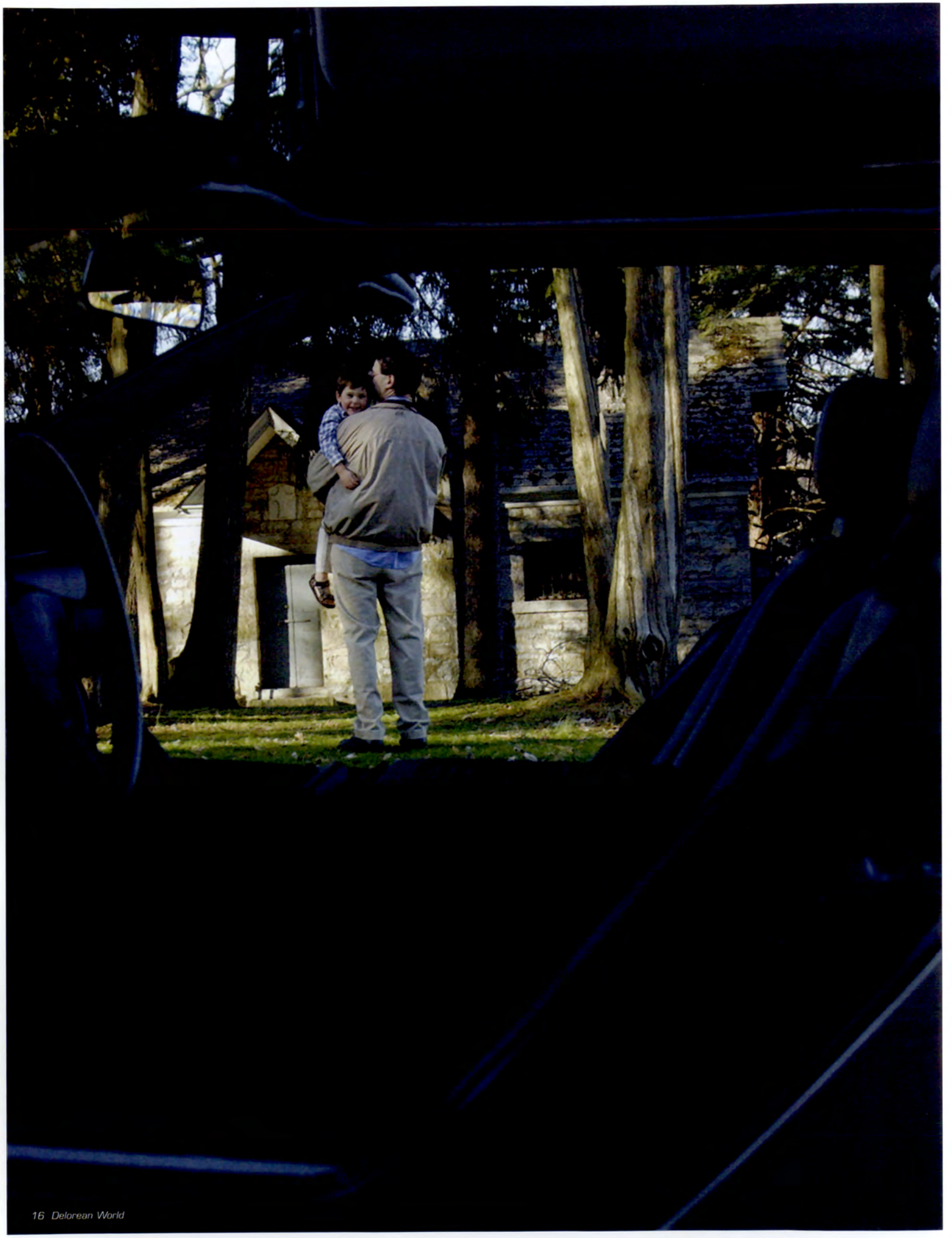
I was born in the United Kingdom at Sheffield, the main steel city. My father Tony worked as a chartered engineer (as was my grandfather) under several firms in the steel industry. He settled only a few miles from the Lotus factory by chance and did some contract work for them on the chassis for the DMC-12. I would come home to hear stories of this new car with gullwings to be built in Northern Ireland. Dad of course never got to drive one as this was 1980. I emigrated to New Zealand in 1986 and have lived in Wellington, New Zealand ever since. I hardly ever thought about the car until recently, chatting with a medical colleague and friend who likes cars too. He mentioned one of his patients owned a DeLorean. This got me thinking and I placed a search on TradeMe, the New Zealand version of EBay. A few weeks later a copy of *Road and Track* with a DeLorean article came up and then a month later a 1:18 model and then a bit later the real thing! Yes a DeLorean was for sale in New Zealand and believe it or not, only 20 km from me in a barn. A man from Korea also wanted to buy it for a museum. But VIN 6191 became mine and remains a car to be driven. Inbetween restorations and work it has been a fair way around New Zealand and to Southwards Car Museum where another DeLorean is housed. That caused a commotion as their DeLorean had not been driven for many years. Here was a real working one at the main entrance. Many conversations and photos later we could leave. I am always pleased to see that even after 25 years how people still relate to the car or the *Back to the Future* films and how many people want to talk to you about their experience or take photos. No other car I know can do this. In New Zealand there are 9 Ds. I now own VIN 502 as well and know of a new enthusiast in Christchurch who imported his DeLorean on the same boat. It's a small world. My father will be visiting us soon for Christmas; I can hardly wait to see his face as he drives away from the airport in the DeLorean. Its number plates are 4 ABFJ in tribute to him. It will be the first time he has driven one, strange after working on the design all those years ago. The threads of life keep entwining.

COVERS THAT WEREN'T

Over the years DeLorean World has accumulated hundreds of pictures. Picking a cover is a difficult task. Sometimes pictures resemble each other closely. Sometimes one does something right that another beautiful shot does wrong. Decisions are often made on trivialities. Here are some you missed.

DMC





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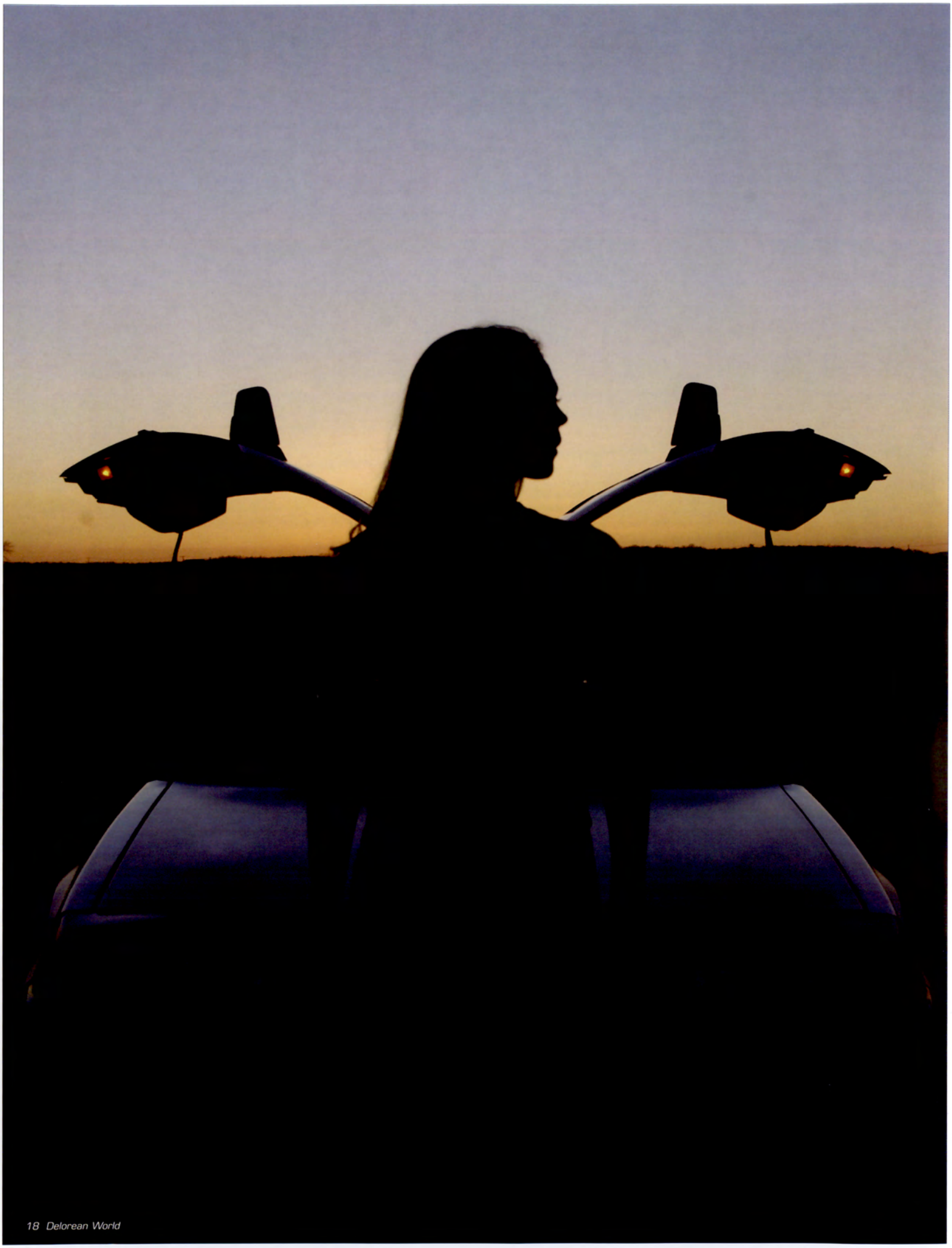

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Gold Storm

Story: Sascha Skucek

It was on the hunt for the Visioneering DeLorean that I first spoke with Bill Ziegenbein, a dealer and rare car collector, known by the reputable auction houses in the country. "Something wasn't right" about the Visioneering car he said, and he eventually lost money trying to fix and sell it. But equally interesting was his claim that he owned a gold DeLorean.

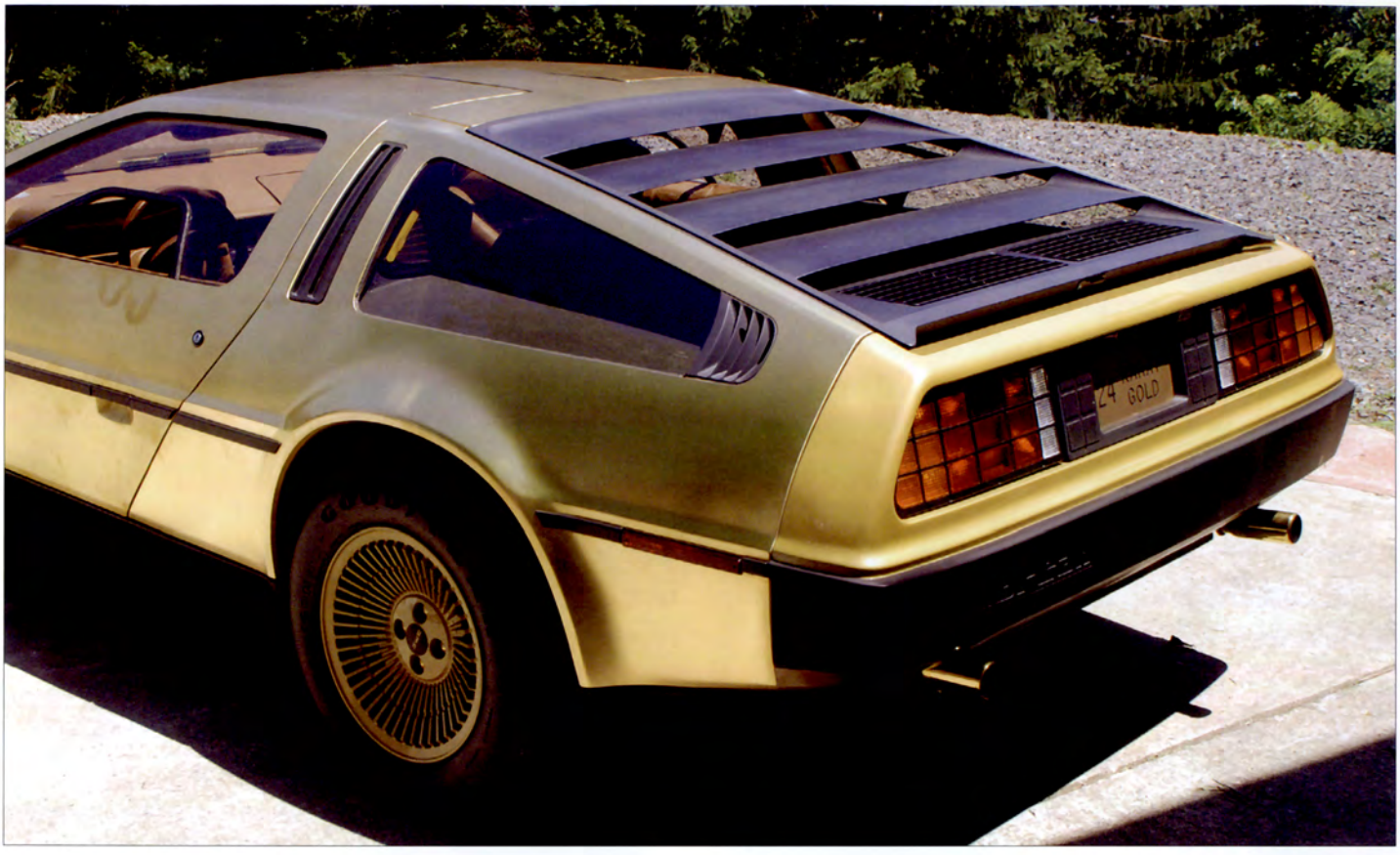
"The fourth gold car?" I asked, wondering if I'd stumbled onto the story of Dr. Michael Feldman who'd had his stainless DeLorean gold plated. So the rumor went, he'd long sold the car and the new owner liked his privacy somewhere in the Toronto area.

"No, this is one of the originals," Ziegenbein said.

That made little sense to me, with one in Reno and the other in Los Angeles accounted for. Stranger things have happened in DeLorean history, however, and I asked to see the car. At first Ziegenbein was agreeable, but in subsequent phone calls, he seemed to have less and less time until he simply said he'd call me when he was able. He claimed the car was somewhere deep in the warehouse of a friend and he didn't have the care to uncover it just now.

That left Carl Winters and gold car number three, the little black sheep made from spare parts and one extra gold plated gullwing door. American Express had insisted that DeLorean Motor Company keep an extra set of panels in case something was damaged on the two that were built at the factory. Whatever happened to the original replacement passenger side gullwing is a mystery. It probably adorns the wall of a former factory employee, a glimmering reminder of the good times of 1981 that didn't last nearly long enough.

The third gold DeLorean was stamped with the last VIN, 20105 and raffled away by Consolidated International on December 16, 1985. Legend says that the winner at first refused the car, saying he hadn't entered any raffle, that he wouldn't do such a thing. But



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MODEL	BODY TYPE	PORT OF ENTRY	METHOD OF TRANSPORTATION
DELOREAN	2-DOOR	BALTIMORE	TRUCK

INTERIOR	VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NO.	ENGINE NO.	MODEL YEAR
BROWN	SCEDT26TDD020105		1983

STANDARD FEATURES

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- Counter Balanced Gull-Wing Doors
- 4-Wheel Independent Suspension
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- Body Side Molding
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the man thought it over and called back the next day. He remembered that a gas station attendant had been so pressing that he buy a ticket, he'd capitulated just to make her quiet.

The story continues that when the winner finally saw what all the fuss was about-a pile of running gold–he'd let out a wide-eyed "Well, shit!" and a "What am I supposed to do with that?"

The car was almost immediately sold to Harry Kaufman Motorcars and then to Richard Ruby in Glovesdale, New York. After the 1987 stock market crash Ruby sold the car through a half page ad in Hemmings Motor News to Carl Winters.

* * * * *

At his home in Cresaptown, Maryland, Winters opens his garage and home to me and fellow Association board member Mark Shearer. "You've got the whole afternoon," Winters says. He's a kind man, with cropped white hair and a big smile. The hint of southern gentleman echoes in his words and mannerisms. As a retired owner of multiple businesses over 21 years ago, Winters became an avid collector of rare automobiles. But now, he's reluctantly begun to look for buyers for the gold DeLorean.

Money isn't the issue. As far as he's concerned, he made enough for himself, his children and grandchildren to last the rest of their lives. "It's not a need at all," Winters says. "What bugs me most is that it's such a nice car, a valuable car, and I can't use it. It's the only thing I have and own that I can't use."

Damage to his stainless steel DeLorean (VIN 16516) is far more easily repaired than to his gold one he figures. Overall, he's driven the gold car on the roads only twice. Once in a parade and another at Charlotte Speedway where the car was appraised at $250,000.

"What's your best shot on the thing?" Winters suddenly asks me.

"What do I think your best shot is to sell it?" I ask and he nods. "I think, realistically,

within three or four weeks you could sell it for at least $100,000."

"Well I wouldn't let it go for $100,000," Winters says. I nod at him. If I owned VIN 20105, I wouldn't sell it for so little either. This is the last privately held gold DeLorean. And I tell Winters what a shame it would be if it went to a museum, where few would ever get to sit in it or see it running again. A tax deduction doesn't particularly appeal to Winters anyway, although he likes the idea that the car would be out there.

"You'll have to go outside the DeLorean community then," I say, "because they're not ready to pay that kind of money. It all depends on the value of Prototype One."

The highest prices for refurbished DeLoreans are found at DeLorean Motor Company in Texas for $57,000 with stainless steel frame. DeLorean One demands the highest price for original DeLoreans at $71,500, though, Tony Ierardi at DMC Florida has offered to sell refurbished gold plated DeLoreans for $85,000.

It's a far cry from $250,000. But Winters has history on his side. He owns an automotive treasure.

The gold car rumbles to life with one turn of the key and Winters drives it out of his garage for pictures. It's a royal treat listen to the humming engine and to see the gold rims turn. With only 642 total miles, VIN 20105 looks and sounds like a flawless DeLorean, with a plush saddlebag brown leather interior. I dare to ask to sit inside. Winters agrees.

"I'm in no rush to do anything," Winters says. "I just feel that the car really oughta be someplace where people can enjoy it and people can come see it."

Frankly, the off-tinted passenger door is

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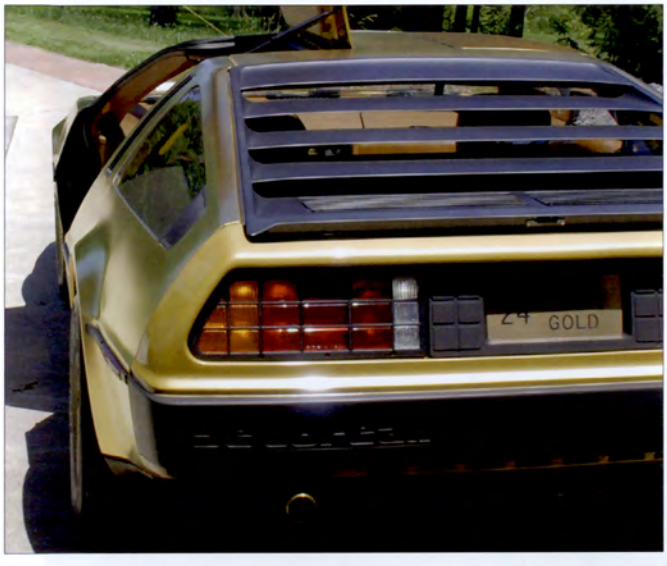
beautiful, a part of the story that Winters realized long ago shouldn't be altered. Its imperfection makes it perfect.

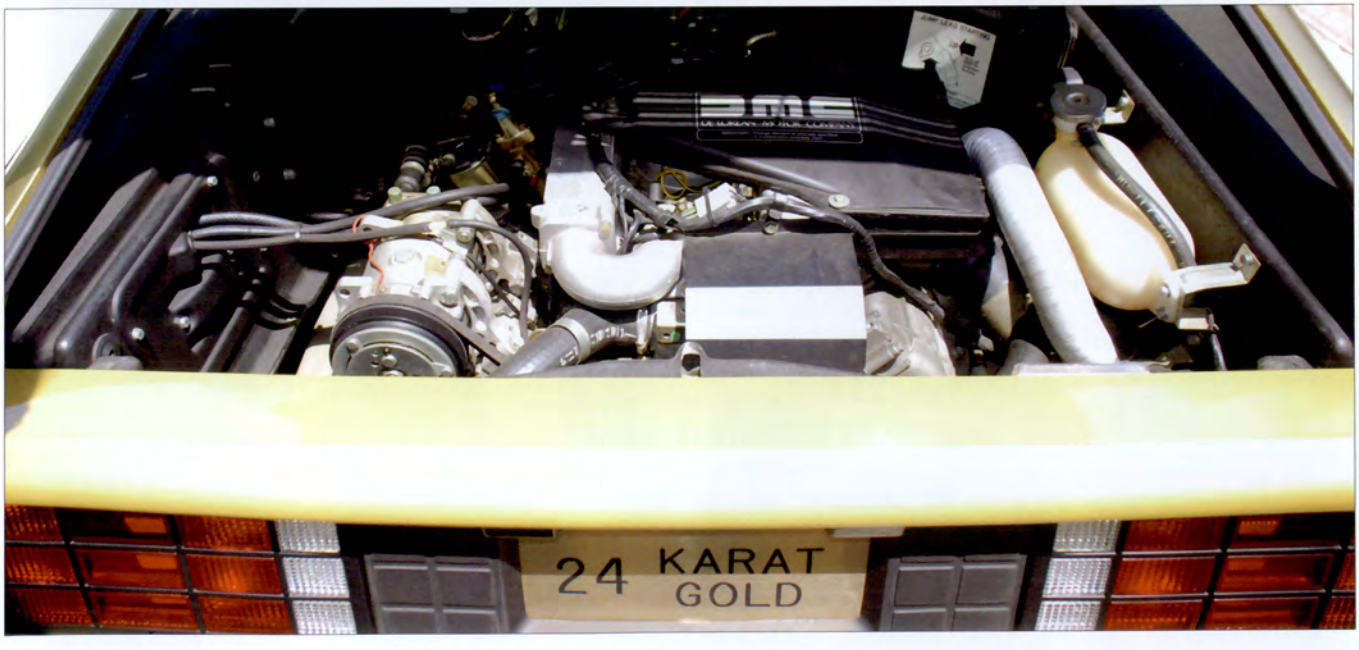
Winters has no illusions about his life. He may not be around next year and he doesn't know which of his children want the gold DeLorean.

"It's a good position to be in," I say, "to not need to sell something."

"You know," he says, "it is a good position and then again it is not."

I guess he refers to the responsibility of ownership. The things we own end up owning us if we're not careful. Just how far is an individual's obligation to a piece of history? Winters isn't sure how much less than the appraised value he'd accept. He'd probably bend to $200,000, might not even argue if it came down to $195,000. "But I don't know," he says. In the meantime, the car is well cared for.





DELOREAN World

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Well, it's been 6 months since I purchased my first DeLorean, VIN 5199. It's amazing how a simple conversation can turn out to lead one in a direction they never dreamed they'd go. I had sold my 1968 Pontiac GTO only months before and was talking to a new friend who was telling me about all the shows he attends with his Pontiac Grand Am. I had mentioned how the muscle car thing had run its course in my life and how the whole hot rod thing was just not interesting to me any more.

As we sat there talking, I happened to ask if he'd ever seen a DeLorean at one of the shows, thinking that I would love to just see one, but I could surely never be able to afford one. Surely they were 75k or more! Well the next thing I know, I'm up all night on the internet looking at DeLoreans! Oh my gosh! I was smitten for life!

The next thing I knew I was in Phoenix for a show and was scheduling a quick trip up to Spokane, WA. There, a young man named Michael Wiseman had an 81 DeLorean for sale. The car was pristine and had only 18k miles on it to boot. After I returned home and several phone calls later, s/n 5199 was on it's way to me in Memphis, Tennessee via car hauler.

I'll never forget the day it arrived and we pulled it off the truck. I pulled it across the street to my shop and immediately a van wheeled in behind me where a teenager jumped out with his mother. The kid literally went bananas over the car. Neither he nor his mom had never seen a DeLorean before. An hour later, I was still showing people the car and that was just the beginning. A month or so later, I found another car in Oregon on ebay, started bidding and he next thing I know, it's on the way too. This one, VIN 2113, wasn't in the best of shape, so I decided to do what I'd wanted to do from the start...I began building a Back to the Future DeLorean.

Now we are advertising the car on our website *www.exhibitainc.com*, and recouping some of the money we've invested, but more importantly is that it's been a fantastic ride, (no pun intended). Everywhere we go in either DeLorean we attract crowds, and when I'm in the BTTF version, I can't get out of the parking lot generally for an hour for all the questions and the picture takers...and you know, it's just plain fun! I absolutely love it when my wife Karen and I cruise around and watch the faces of everyone! There are always smiles and always opportunities to meet new friends. Yes I am smitten! I love my DeLoreans!

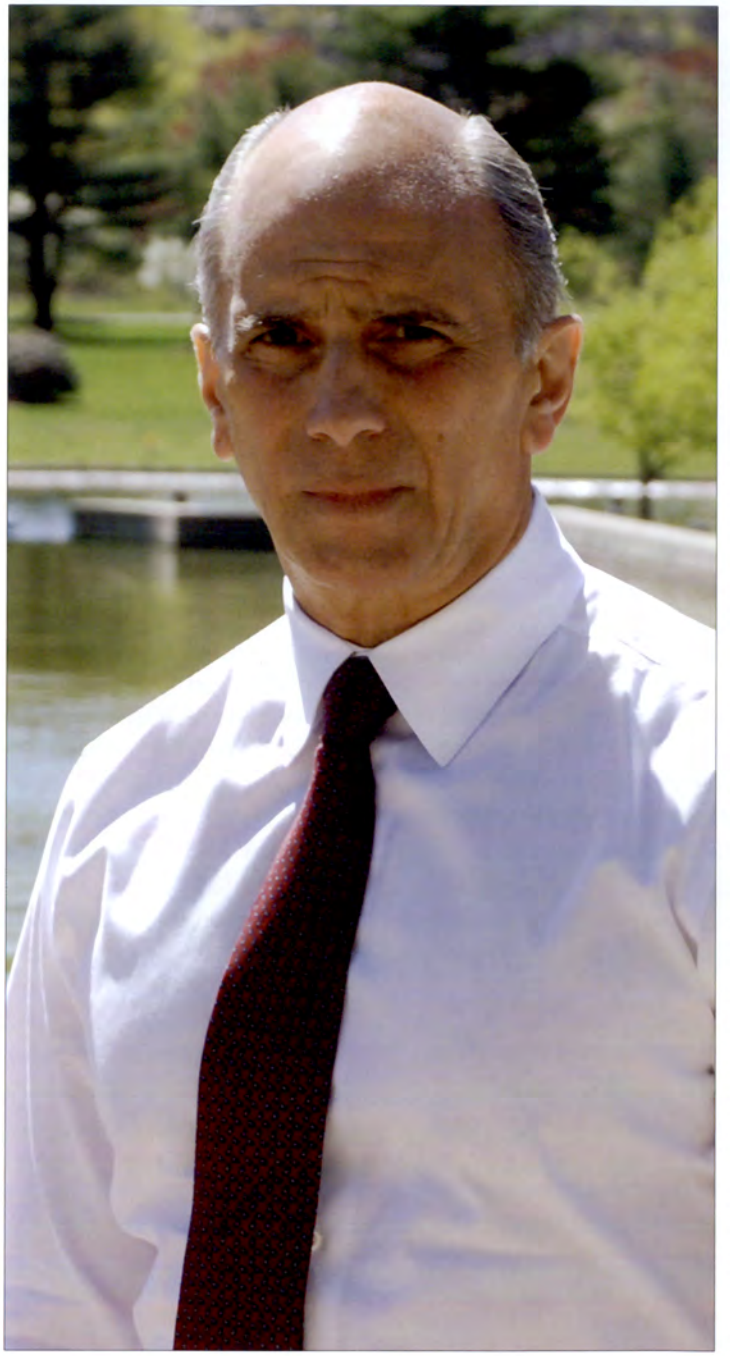
Sincerely,
Don Furr

The Dellis Legend

Fred Dellis grew up loving cars. His mother would have told you there was no question he was going into the car business. As John DeLorean brought Chevrolet from the brink and entered the muscle car era with the Pontiac GTO, Dellis came to admire the car mogul's pulse for the upcoming youth of America.

"He knew what the hot spots were," Dellis says. "Not only as a good engineer but as a marketing guy."

By the end of the 1970s Dellis started Legend Industries, first as an aftermarket company and then as an OEM, servicing Fiat and Ferrari. By then, DeLorean's dream



was in full swing inspiring automotive aspirations, and Dellis often remarked to his friends that he would like to work for him. His first efforts to make contact with the head of DeLorean Motor Company failed.

"So I wrote a letter and had it hand delivered, marked 'personal' and 'confidential'," Dellis says. Simply put, he wrote that he'd followed DeLorean's career all his life and that he hoped to speak with him to see if their professional careers might somehow cross.

DeLorean responded with a one paragraph note. Dellis wrote back three words.

DeLorean answered with one: When?

Soon after Dellis found himself standing in front of his childhood idol at the DMC offices on Park Avenue in New York. "So you're the guy who likes to write letters," DeLorean said.

"Well, I'm in your office, aren't I?" Dellis replied.

The car mogul smiled.

* * * * *

The plant had already been built in Belfast. The PRV6 was already being field tested. At the time, Legend Industries had been positively reviewed internationally for engine design and turbo charging. After discussing the possibilities with DeLorean, Dellis began field testing the Renault engine for a Turbo DeLorean S version to be released in 1984. It didn't help that the early 80s saw a host of new emissions laws that greatly hindered performance cars.

"John's car did 132 horsepower and 127 on the dino," Dellis says. "You had cars doing nine, ten seconds in 0-60 times. It was dismal, but back then that was the best they could do with the constraints of emissions."

But DeLorean was avant garde according to Dellis. He incorporated so many unique ideas into his sports car that an additional engine project was virtually impossible.

"I don't know how the decision came to use the PRV-6," Dellis says, "but that was what Legend had to work with."

After trips to Belfast, proposals and anticipated budgets, Dellis set to work on modifying the PRV-6. It looked like an expensive engine to build, he says now, with a big budget that fell short. For turbo-charging it didn't work very well, lasting a meager 12 minutes on the dino. Legend Industries began modifying the motor, replacing rings, headgaskets, pistons and the left and right camshafts. It took many changes to bring the engine to 1,000 hours of durability on the dino.

Renault didn't want anyone fooling around with their engine. Bosch didn't want anyone screwing around with the fuel system. But bit by bit, Dellis gained their respect. The rope gave out, little by little, as Renault realized that Legend Industries understood their product and had professional knowledge in engine modification.

"When you're building a car for the general public, you have to build it so that it will not only take abuse, but lack of maintenance," Dellis says. "You test the product as though it weren't maintained according to standards. Ideally, when you stop a turbo car, you should let it idle for a couple minutes. Nobody does that. You're racing to the station, you're racing to the store, you shut it off right away. It goes through thermal stages that, ideally, you wouldn't want. So you have to design a car to take that kind of abuse. Same thing with the transmission. You might not want someone to do a 6,000 RPM drag start with the car, but the reality is somebody's going to do it. And if it breaks, it's never that the owner was abusing it, but rather that the product failed. We had to build the engines with a high degree of margin to take that kind of abuse."

Had the car made it to production, Dellis claims the car would have gone 0-60 miles per hour in 5.8 seconds.

Tests included less than optimal oil quality, radical climate change from 0 to 120 degrees Fahrenheit and various altitudes.

Contrary to popular thinking today, DeLorean VIN 502 was not the third car off the assembly line in Belfast. The car was pieced together by hand at Legend Industries in the United States. There were five cars involved in the project, three of which were 502, 528 and 530. 501 was never confirmed as a Legend car (nor is it confirmed that it ever existed as a DeLorean at all). Various parts were used for different stages of testing, including the rear frame of Pilot 16.

It quickly became apparent that the Achilles heal of the S project was not the engine. The modified PRV-6 in 502 that made it to the ride and drive on November 19, 1981 at the Bridgehampton Raceway was capable of more power than the torque capacities of the transmission. Nevertheless, John DeLorean, DMC and Renault employees were impressed. The S version would have been even stronger than 502 with different tires and ground effects–a higher output product at a premium price. Unfortunately, with the financial difficulties of DeLorean Motor Company, the project stalled.

Had the car made it to production, Dellis claims the car would have gone 0-60 miles per hour in 5.8 seconds. "In 1984, it would have been the fastest legal production car, emissions certified, sold in the United States," he says.

Legend Industries suffered a series of misfortunes with its contracts. DeLorean Motor Company was unable to pay the $19.4 million in expenses it had accrued for its turbo model. "Just about that time, we hit the 24% interest rate," Dellis remembers. Within two months, Fiat Motor Company left the country and cancelled its orders with Legend for the Fiat Spyder. "Timing was not on our side when the stones fell."

Through it all, Dellis became a close friend of John DeLorean. Had it been in his power, he would have kept things as quiet and respectful as possible. But the turbo engines and other parts, the DeLoreans and anything else related to the project were stripped away from Legend and auctioned off, likely including the turbo engine in VIN 1860, belonging to Marc Levy.[1]

"Somebody might have bought it," Dellis says, "but I can't attest to the authenticity of that engine. There were a lot of engines floating around that people claimed were Legend Engines that really weren't. And there were companies that took off where we ended."

These days Dellis says he doesn't regret the experience. When people ask if he's angry he tells them no. "John DeLorean didn't go out of business so that he didn't have to pay me. The biggest hurt wasn't the money," he says. "It was not being able to work with the talented team we'd put together."

[1]See the Winter 2006 issue of DeLorean World, The Other Twin Turbo, page 16

A DeLorean Kitty

"Are there any other members with a DeLorean Snowcat?" writes Jamie Dooley, owner of a rare DMC 1450 Super Imp. The design changed little from Thiokol's 1450 until John DeLorean purchased the company and branded the Cats with the "DMC" logo in the early 80s. Shortly after, the company changed its name to LMC, Logan Manufacturing Company, named for its location in Logan, Utah. The Dooley Cat features an enclosed cargo deck and two man cab with a six cylinder motor. Jamie and her husband plan to restore it soon. Few are left with the DMC logo since John DeLorean quickly sold the company to pay his legal bills following his arrest.

LOSING THE VISION

Story: Sascha Skucek

It's cold again. The wave of warm weather which permeated the East in March has not followed me to Michigan. My 1990 Toyota Celica doesn't like the winters anymore. The temperature needle stays consistently at C, the engine never quite warming properly. I'm a little surprised the car made it through the night into Indiana where my search began, looking for the last exile – the last great mystery of the DeLorean puzzle.

Now I find myself in Coldwater, Michigan. The lake is frozen and the rows of beachfront homes seem deserted. Few signs of life are evident across the snow-covered landscape. I pull up to the address I uncovered earlier that morning and step out into the brisk air. The mailbox sign reads Jackson. At least I got that much right.

A tall, middle-aged man with silver hair is standing inside his enclosed porch doing laundry. I ring the bell. He opens the door and greets me politely.

"Are you Jon Jackson?" I ask.

"That's me," he says. My heart beats faster.

"Mr. Jackson, do you have a DeLorean?"

His expression suddenly changes, and he narrows his eyes on me with suspicion. After a pause he says, "I might have one."

An hour later I'm no closer to seeing the Visioneering Prototype, the Giugiaro redesign of the production-style DeLorean. Jackson explains that he's in no mood to go digging through the snow to show me the car. Maybe in the spring. Yeah he'd bought the DeLorean in September of 1999 at the Kruse International Auction in Auburn, Indiana. But he'd thought it would be a working car.

"I have half a mind to dump it in the trash," Jackson says, and then as the conversation goes on he seems conflicted. "I got it running. I'll fix it someday, maybe donate it to a museum and put my name on a plaque as the guy who restored it." If he did something wrong with the restoration, who would know, he insists. There isn't a record of the car, since it's a prototype, right?

I smile, trying hard not to cringe. The record for that DeLorean is everywhere.

When John DeLorean dies, Jackson states, the car might be worth something. John is dead, I say, and Jackson stares at me, seemingly calculating, trying to understand my motive. Well what's a car like that worth anyway, he asks. $50,000? You can't even buy a decent new car for that these days.

Maybe $50,000 restored, I suggest, not sure. Everything depends on the value of Prototype 1.

Jackson promises pictures. He's cold about his car but cordial to my unexpected visit. "I appreciate that you came all this way, and I know it means a lot to you," he says, "but I'm not going to show you the car today."

I leave empty-handed. It's been two years since I started looking for this car, but even at journey's end, this isn't over.

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Don Williams of Blackhawk fame bought the Visioneering Prototype on November 24, 1984. It lay dormant for years, forgotten until 1998 when it suddenly appeared in Scottsdale, Arizona, selling for half the price Williams had paid.

By coincidence I got in touch with Don's son, Ron Williams, the curator of the Auto Collections at the Imperial Palace in Las Vegas. He knew about the car and said he'd help me. But he was busy. Months followed. Occasionally I made a follow up call, reaching voicemail and then no reply. More than a year passed before I packed my bags, flew to Las Vegas and appeared unannounced at Ron Williams' office, first thing in the morning as the museum opened. "I know you've been extremely busy," I said, "but every lead I know about this car ends with you, and it's important for the DeLorean community."

The young Williams smiled, a little amused. And without a word, he leaned forward and began checking databases on his computer. "It came to Vegas," he said after a few minutes, "but it never went through the Auto Collections." He got on the phone. A half hour later, I got the lead I'd been waiting for. Bill Ziegenbein had bought the car for $10,500 and presumably taken it to Detroit where he owned a dealership.

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Such was the thrill of chasing a vision, filled with

passion, focus and commitment. The DeLorean community has always been so small, so disorganized, with little hope of ever getting bigger. The car's history is assured, but its energy fades with time. Its future is uncertain. All we aficionados can do is make order of the chaos following DeLorean Motor Company's dissolution. We can attempt to organize the pieces of the puzzle scattered across the United States, Great Britain and the rest of the world.

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Ziegenbein picked up the phone and remembered the car immediately. "Something didn't look right about it," he said. "It wasn't in good shape." His mechanics had gotten it to run and done other work, but he quickly became disillusioned and sold the car at Kruse for the rock-bottom price of $8,700, less than a year since it had been sold in Arizona.

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There's something about the bad blood of it all. As polarized as John DeLorean was in the 70s and 80s, he demonstrated many respectable virtues that won the hearts and loyalties of the cult that drove his cars. But even DeLorean admitted that he'd taken many wrong turns and behaved badly. He alienated the likes of Margaret Thatcher and on down the power spectrum, from car moguls and executives to his employees. The vicious myths are still the greater legend, obscuring a great man's accomplishments. Cocaine and jail are better associated with the DeLorean automobile than what it was built for; as the safe sports car. The enduring sports car.

I took my DeLorean out for its final drive to the car wash this summer, prepping it for its long trip to England and a better future. Someone approached me like they always do. "I have to ask," the young man said. "Where's the flux capacitor?"

"Right," I said with gritted teeth. But I forced the smile. "This DeLorean doesn't have one." I had the impulsive urge to tackle the stranger to the ground and smack him silly. There's more to this car than just a movie. And so my love of a black little pilot car ended the way it began. With Back to the Future. When I first bought my DeLorean, the film was such a great beginning to my fascination. Over the years I just wanted more–to vindicate something about the DeLorean legacy.

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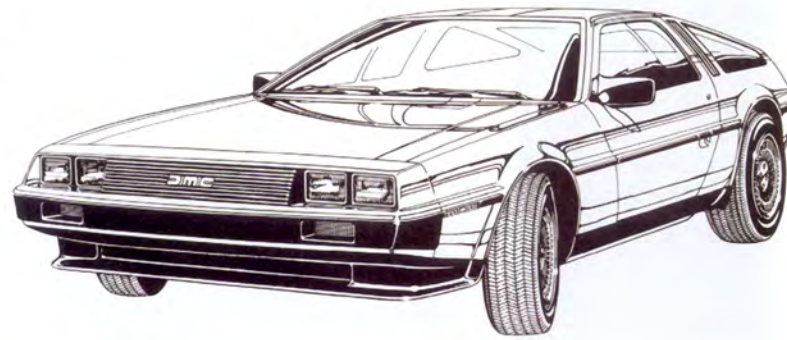
Sheer stubbornness drove me to Auburn, Indiana in the summer of 2006, in spite of the firm and definite no I had received by telephone and emails. In accordance with their privacy policy, no, Kruse would not tell me who bought the DeLorean. No, they would not help me get in touch with him. Without any more leads, poof, the vision was all but gone.

Even in person Carolyn Richmond of Kruse shook her head. "I know who you are," she said, "I can tell from the magazine you're holding in your hand, but I still can't help you."

"Can I just talk to you?" I said and an hour long conversation ensued, quickly involving a member of the Kruse legal team. The two women were sympathetic. They too were in the car business and knew how frustrating it was to find something special. Again I reiterated, "It's important for the DeLorean community." Write a letter the lawyer suggested and Carolyn would forward it on. She also made an attempt to call the last



known number of the buyer as I waited in the office. The number was disconnected. Everything seemed a little fruitless.

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Somewhere down deep, however, I felt as though I was expressing a lie. I never did it for the community. I did it for the car. I did it for the legacy of the man who I'd come to respect for his vision. A community implies people with common interests working together. And with the best of intentions and heart I tried to help build one. But the bad blood continues. There is no

consistent goal. There is no underlying vision for DeLorean owners to rally behind. This is too cheap, that's too elite. No decision seems to come without a divide, without stepping on a plethora of egos. Good ol' money drives everything DeLorean like it always has. The true Samaritans who try to make something better–try to build a community–end up tired and fall by the wayside.

I've grown tired. I let the things that didn't matter get to me. But in the end, even my car couldn't help me like it had. The car was always pure, without politics and judgment. Yet no matter how much I loved my DeLorean, it couldn't love me back. It's the owners who matter more. I just wasn't able to reach enough of them to help make a difference.

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It was this past March that Carolyn relinquished Jon Jackson's name to me via email. With an address in Fort Wayne, Indiana and a name, with the possibility of an end to the tunnel, sleep was impossible. In the dead of night, I drove on the whim, afraid that if I didn't do it now, the Visioneering Prototype would somehow slip out of my reach.

An old woman on her walker opened the door of the address in Fort Wayne the next morning. She didn't know a Jon Jackson. She hadn't bought the house from Jon Jackson. The door closed.

A dozen Jon Jacksons were listed in the Fort Wayne directory. But even on the road, the internet is a beautiful thing, provided you have a cell phone and a friend online to help you. Triangulation of people searches found the middle initial of the Jackson associated with the old Fort Wayne address. There were far fewer Jon H. Jackson's in Indiana. It soon became apparent that only one matched the age I was looking for with two confirmed addresses. One in Toledo, Ohio and one in Coldwater, Michigan. I drove north, expecting to find a summer home in Coldwater before I would head east to Toledo. To my good fortune, Jackson resided in Michigan. To my bad fortune, he turned me away. Since I saw him in March, he never answered my letters, never returned my phone calls.

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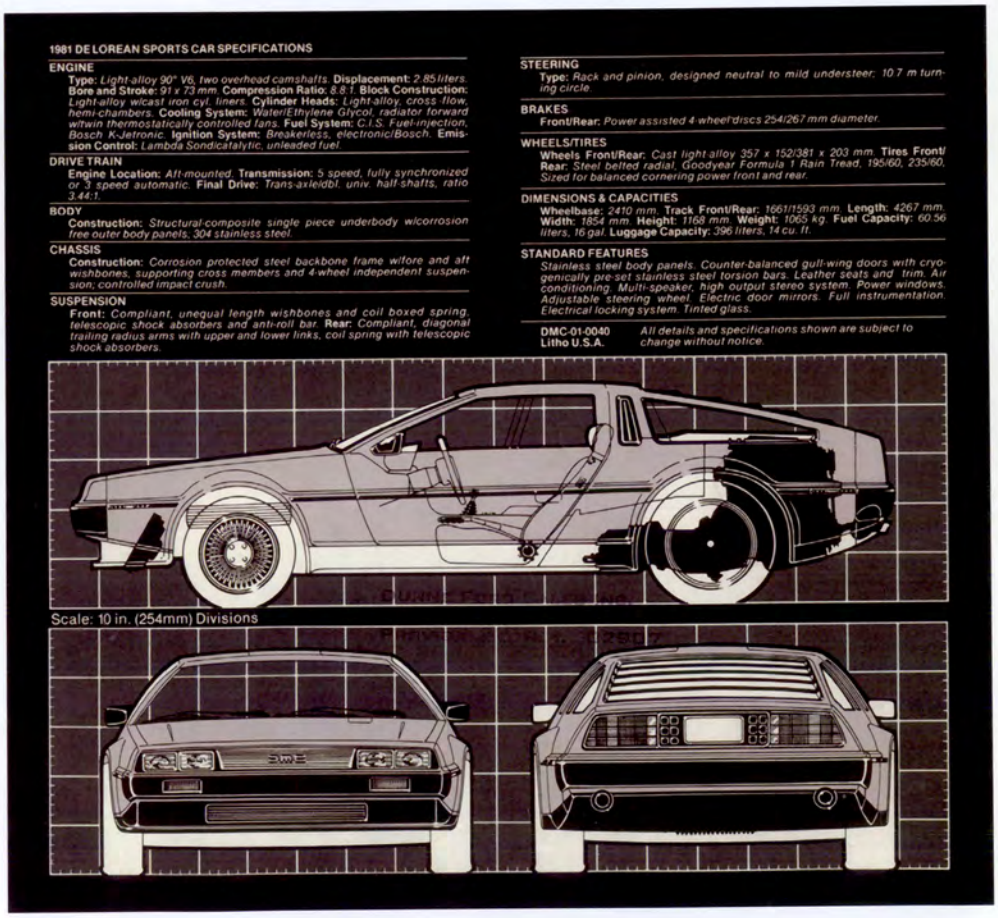
It's hot again. Maybe a little too hot for May in Michigan. Coldwater is a far different place than I last saw it. Livelier. Busier. A different sort of beauty than the icy whiteness I'd seen just a few months before. Something feels final about this trip. This time I've come with money. $25,000. All my friends think I'm crazy, but "cash is king" I keep telling them.

I park at the public boat docks and take the short stroll along Pearl Beach Road. Jackson is outside his garage, the doors open. He stares at a long pipe resting on a wooden horse, next to a wheelbarrow. He's tan, in his brown Speedos, surprisingly fit for a man in his 60s.

"Yeah," Jackson responds when I reintroduce myself.

"This is such a beautiful area," I say. "I like it much better without the snow."


1981 DE LOREAN SPORTS CAR SPECIFICATIONS
ENGINE
Type: Light-alloy 90° V6, two overhead camshafts. Displacement: 2.85 liters. Bore and Stroke: 91 x 73 mm. Compression Ratio: 8.8:1. Block Construction: Light-alloy w/cast iron cyl. liners. Cylinder Heads: Light-alloy, cross-flow, hemi-chambers. Cooling System: Water/Ethylene Glycol, radiator forward w/twin thermostatically controlled fans. Fuel System: C.I.S. Fuel-injection, Bosch K-Jetronic. Ignition System: Breakerless, electronic/Bosch. Emission Control: Lambda Sondicatalytic, unleaded fuel.
DRIVE TRAIN
Engine Location: Aft-mounted. Transmission: 5 speed, fully synchronized or 3 speed automatic. Final Drive: Trans-axle/dbl. univ. half-shafts, ratio 3.44:1.
BODY
Construction: Structural-composite single piece underbody w/corrosion free outer body panels, 304 stainless steel.
CHASSIS
Construction: Corrosion protected steel backbone frame w/fore and aft wishbones, supporting cross members and 4-wheel independent suspension; controlled impact crush.
SUSPENSION
Front: Compliant, unequal length wishbones and coil boxed spring, telescopic shock absorbers and anti-roll bar. Rear: Compliant, diagonal trailing radius arms with upper and lower links, coil spring with telescopic shock absorbers.
STEERING
Type: Rack and pinion, designed neutral to mild understeer; 10.7 m turning circle.
BRAKES
Front/Rear: Power assisted 4-wheel discs 254/267 mm diameter.
WHEELS/TIRES
Wheels Front/Rear: Cast light-alloy 357 x 152/381 x 203 mm. Tires Front/Rear: Steel belted radial, Goodyear Formula 1 Rain Tread, 195/60, 235/60, Sized for balanced cornering power front and rear.
DIMENSIONS & CAPACITIES
Wheelbase: 2410 mm. Track Front/Rear: 1661/1593 mm. Length: 4267 mm. Width: 1854 mm. Height: 1168 mm. Weight: 1065 kg. Fuel Capacity: 60.56 liters, 16 gal. Luggage Capacity: 396 liters, 14 cu. ft.
STANDARD FEATURES
Stainless steel body panels. Counter-balanced gull-wing doors with cryogenically pre-set stainless steel torsion bars. Leather seats and trim. Air conditioning. Multi-speaker, high output stereo system. Power windows. Adjustable steering wheel. Electric door mirrors. Full instrumentation. Electrical locking system. Tinted glass.
DMC-01-0040
Litho U.S.A.
All details and specifications shown are subject to change without notice.
Scale: 10 in. (254mm) Divisions

"It's nice for some. People here have more money than sense."

I tell him I hope he might show me the Visioneering DeLorean, reminding him that he had suggested he'd let me see it when the snow melted.

"If I told you that then I was talking out my nose," he says. "That car is the furthest thing from my mind right now."

As I stand there watching him work, he continues to speak, repeating much of what he'd said in March. He promises the car is in much better shape than he bought it, although he's still bitter about its condition when he purchased it at Kruse. Yet he continues to play undecided. He says one thing and then seemingly the opposite. "I have half a mind to just get rid of the piece of shit," he says.

be rid of the damn thing so I have the space. But I'm not going to do it. Even if you came in here with $100,000 I probably wouldn't sell it."

"All I can offer you is cash," I say, "or recognition in a story."

"My name splashed on a page, that's not important," he replies. "The money's not important."

"Well, I can give you both," I say and Jackson lets out a genuine laugh. Between us, he continues to be apologetic about our tension saying at one point, "It's not you."

No, it's something about his DeLorean that's uneasy here. And I can't figure it out. Is he embarrassed to show me its condition? Had he taken it apart and wanted to put some work into it before donating it away? Giving it to a museum isn't particularly impressive to him either since he claims the tax credit means little to him. No, he

"If you like, I can help you with that," I say and pull out the money, stacked neatly in four bundles of $100 bills.

Jackson turns away from me and walks in the garage. It's the longest pause in our conversation. When he comes back out, he's still not looking at me. "Well that would get my money back," he says, "and I probably should just give it to you and

says, he'll restore it–just maybe not in his lifetime. Maybe his wife will toss it in a dumpster.

"Well, I know you're in it for 25k, so if I change my mind I can call you."

"No sir," I say. "This offer is only good until tomorrow because I have other plans for the money."

Jackson pauses again. He's weighing the

options. Yes, a fully restored Visioneering Prototype is worth more than $25,000. Key word restored. I can't help but deduce that the car is far from pristine, without a title and, according to Jackson, with a specific instruction under the wheel well that says Do Not Drive. Whatever the car is worth in its current condition, one thing seems clear. It will cost far more than its value to restore it properly.

"My offer's good till tomorrow," I repeat, "so you can call me."

"Well," he says, "I won't."

"Okay. I'm sorry to keep showing up here like this," I say. "I didn't mean to offend you, but you weren't returning my calls."

"No no," he says," you can show up anytime. It's just that I don't have the time. No one is going to see that damn car."

Frustrating as the encounter is, I can't help but admire his stubbornness. "I'm probably the wrong guy to own this car," Jackson says shortly before I bid him goodbye. More powerful than the money and the fame is the stinging notion that, at this particular time, he has the luxury to simply not care. It's a powerful position to be in.

I leave Coldwater with a sense of freedom, unbound from the chains of unknown. I never did see the Visioneering Prototype, but it's been made clear that I won't. It's an ending just the same. I met John DeLorean and saw America in his car. I sat in a Gold car and drove the Legend Turbo. In my hand I held the sand that sold Prototype 1. My grandmother once said that in the game of life, you have to shoot to score. Whatever comes of the tinted sliding window DeLorean in Jackson's possession, I took the shot.

whatsoever things are true,
whatsoever things are honest,
whatsoever things are just,
whatsoever things are pure,
whatsoever things are lovely,
whatsoever things are of good report,
if there be any virtue,
and if there be any praise,
think on these things.

If you're thinking turbo, think twin turbo.

The most efficient method of turbo charging your DeLorean's V-6 engine is with two turbochargers—one turbo unit for each three cylinders.

When the DeLorean factory began developing a performance model, the twin-turbo configuration was the system they preferred (see Road & Track, December, 1984-page 37). The Island Twin-Turbocharging System is the most faithful to that DeLorean factory turbo design.

QUALITY

- The Island Twin-Turbo System includes a matched pair of IHI Turbochargers, the same brand used on most Indianapolis 500 racers.
- All intake manifolding is made of cast aluminum, which can't rust or crack like metal tubing.
- A matched pair of exhaust manifolds are fabricated from rugged cast iron.

PERFORMANCE

- 0–60 mph . . . . . 6.3 seconds
- Top Speed . . . . . 140 mph
- Total exhaust breathing capacity is increased to a BIG 4-inches total diameter (2 inches for each bank).
- No turbo lag.

REPUTATION

- Island Turbo has been turbocharging DeLoreans since 1981 and has earned one of the most respected names in the turbo industry.

If you're thinking turbo, think twin-turbo. There's only one — Island Turbo, the DeLorean turbo experts.

California EPA Approval Pending

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